



Welaka Gazette

October 2021

From The Mayor's Desk

As we move into the fall, it is a beautiful time in Welaka. We are starting to see an end to the rain and the hot temperatures. Our holiday celebrations are right around the corner, and the Welaka Events Committee has been working hard to make this holiday season one of the best Welaka has ever had. They have started planning for our Christmas Parade and festival, which will be on December 11, 2021. Our celebration this year is entitled "Christmas at the River" and will be filled with many more events than in past years. Our Christmas Parade will begin as usual at noon; however, after the parade, everyone is invited to Downtown Park for our first annual Arts and Crafts Festival. Starting at 1:00 PM that day, there will be live music in the park, food trucks, and Christmas Arts and Crafts vendors. The children will have the opportunity to see Santa and get their pictures taken. In the afternoon, there will be a Tree Lighting Ceremony, and to end the day of celebration a Boat Parade at the Welaka floating dock, which will begin at Acosta Creek Marina and end at River Bend. The goal this year is to make our Christmas Celebration a full day of events. The events committee is also working with Friends of Welaka and our local churches to host a Trick or Treat Party for the children on October 31, 2021, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Welaka Town Hall. There will be candy, music, food, and games. Everyone is encouraged to wear their costume (I'll be wearing mine) and join us for a spooktacular evening. Residents are encouraged to come out that afternoon, bring a bag of candy and be a part of giving our candy to the kids. If you would like to be a part of our event, please get in touch with our Events Committee Chairwoman Courtney Desouza, at (904) 554-6458 for more information.

Besides all of the great events planned in the Town of Welaka in the coming days, I am also very excited about all the great things that will be happening in the Town in the coming year. As you know, we just completed our budget meetings and approved our new Town budget will start on October 1, 2021. Our Town Clerk, Jennifer McDaniel, worked very hard on our budget and helped me free of funds for important projects for 2021-2022. Those projects include significant improvements to our roads, new equipment for our General Maintenance and Utility Department to improve our mowing and help clean out our ditches. We also have included a cost of living increase for our Town workers, and perhaps one of the most exciting additions will be two part-time law enforcement officers to work on nights and weekends.

On top of all of that, we are also continuing to update our ordinances and update our comprehensive plan. We will be meeting on October 19 at 6:00 PM to begin updating our Town Charter. We have some great things happening in Welaka, and I am excited to be a part of them. I hope everyone enjoys the Holiday Season and is able to be a part of our Town Events. I look forward to talking to you again next month.

Best Regards,
Mayor Watts

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From Our Council President

Just recently, I was informed of the death of our long-time former Town Attorney, Allen Scott. The day that I found out was the day after my dad died. It was a double whammy and one that I was not expecting. Death makes you slow down and reflect, which is what I've been doing these last few weeks. As a Town, we lost our long-term Council Member, Wille Washington, and long-term former Mayor, Gordon Sands, and now Mr. Scott. As a nation, we are grieving the loss of 13 service members in Afghanistan and the annual remembrance of September 11th.

Grief is a personal issue, but I know that our community and many who are part of it have faced grief this year with the loss of loved ones. A wise stranger recently reminded me of a verse in scripture I've heard many times, in Ecclesiastes, "To everything, there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: ...a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance." This reminded me that there is actually time to grieve and that we don't always have to pretend everything is alright. Honestly, it gave me great comfort. I hope that if you are facing grief, you, too, will find comfort in this as well, and ultimately you will know that you are not alone.

In Your Service,
Jessica Finch
Council President

Town Committees

The Town of Welaka Charter Committee will meet for their first meeting on October 19, 2021, at 6:00 PM to layout the process for drafting a new Town Charter. All residents are welcome to come out that evening and join them at Welaka Town Hall 400 4th Ave. Welaka, Fl. 32193.

The Town of Welaka Citizens Advisory Board will meet for their first meeting on October 8, 2021, at 9:00 AM to lay out the process for the important work ahead for the committee. All residents are welcome to come out that Moring at Welaka Town Hall.

The Town of Welaka Events Committee will meet on October 11, 2021, at 5:45 PM to continue planning for our Trick or Treat Part and Christmas Festival. All residents are welcome to come out that afternoon at Welaka Town Hall and join them.

Monthly Town Meetings

All meetings are at Welaka Town Hall

Located at 400 4th Ave. Welaka, Fl. 32193

October 12, 2021

Zoning Board Meeting 5:30 PM

Code Enforcement Meeting 5:45 PM

Town Council Meeting 6:30 PM

All three meetings will be live-streamed on our Town of Welaka Facebook Page and on our YouTube Channel

October Meter Reading

Will be reading water meters on October 15th. If you have any issues with your water or sewer remember the Town Utility Department is available 24 hours a day at (386) 467-8677 or TDD (800) 955-8771. We ask you to please do your part in conserving water.

Garbage Pickup

Garbage and Recycling pick up will be October 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th. Yard debris pick-up will be on October 4th and the 18th. Please remember to call Waste Pro at (386) 328-5445 if you have any issues with your garbage, yard debris or recycling pick up.

Pay Your Water Bill Online

You can now pay your water bill online using our Online Utility Bill pay system. To get started go to www.welakawater.com and create your account. In your account, you can track your monthly water usage and even set up your account for auto-pay so you never have to worry about a late charge again. If you need assistance setting up your account online please call our Utility Department at (386) 467-9800 option 4. You can also drop your payment by Town Hall anytime using our Utility Payment drop box located to the right of the front door of Town Hall.

September's Recognitions and Proclamations



Town of Welaka Birthday Proclamation for Robert N. Nichols in Recognition of his 96th Birthday

If you would like to recognize a Town of Welaka resident for dedicated community service to our Town, a local student with exceptional grades, or to nominate a Town resident who is celebrating a landmarked birthday such as turning 100 years old, please contact our Town Clerk Jennifer McDaniel at (386) 467-9800 or by email at jennifermcdaniel@welaka-fl.gov. We will be happy to recognize them at our next Council Meeting by public recognition.

Calling All Residents

It is important to the Town of Welaka to have our residents participate in our holiday events. For our Trick or Treat Party at Welaka Town Hall, residents are encouraged to bring a bag of candy and be a part of giving out candy to the kids. We also have many great opportunities to participate in our Christmas Festival, including being in our Christmas Parade, being a vendor at our Arts and Crafts Festival, and joining our boat parade. If you would like to participate or know some who would, please visit our webpage at www.welaka-fl.gov.



TOWN OF WELAKA GOVERNMENT CONTACT LIST:

You may contact the Mayor and Town Council members by phone through the Town Hall phone system or send an email to their official Town of Welaka accounts.

To book a phone or in-person meeting with the Mayor: www.MayorWatts.com

To report an issue or concern: www.TellTownHall.com

To leave a voicemail message for a Town Council member

Method 1

1. Call the **Town of Welaka Town Hall at 386-467-9800**
2. Press the “Town Hall Extension” number of the person to reach their voicemail

Method 2

1. Call the **Town of Welaka Town Hall at 386-467-9800**
2. When the phone system begins speaking press “7”
3. Press the “Option” number of the Council Member to reach their voicemail

Mayor & Town Council Members

Mayor Jamie Watts
Direct Line: 386-524-4009
(386) 467-9800 Extension: 101
jwatts@welaka-fl.gov

Council President Jessica Finch
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 2)
Town Hall Extension: 200
jfinch@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Marianne Milledge
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 3)
Town Hall Extension: 201
mmilledge@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Tonya Long
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 4)
Town Hall Extension: 202
tonyalong@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Kathy Washington
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 4)
Town Hall Extension: 202
kwashington@welaka-fl.gov

Town Departments

Michael Porath - Police Chief
Direct Line: 386-524-4015
Town Hall Extension: 107
mporath@welaka-fl.gov

Jennifer McDaniel - Town Clerk
Direct Line: 386-524-4010
Town Hall Extension: 102
jennifermcdaniel@welaka-fl.gov

Kendrea Welch - Utility Clerk
Direct Line: 386-524-4016
Town Hall Extension: 103
kwelch@welaka-fl.gov

Justin Morris - Building Department
Direct Line: 386-524-4013
Town Hall Extension: 105
building@welaka-fl.gov



TOWN OF WELAKA
PRESENTS

HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREAT PARTY

CANDY, FOOD & FUN GAMES!

Sunday, 31st October, 2021 | at 4 pm until 6 pm
Welaka Town Hall 400 4th Ave, Welaka, FL 32193



RESIDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO COME
OUT BRING CANDY AND PARTICIPATE

**FREE TO THE ENTIRE
COMMUNITY**

TellTownHall.com

Report an Issue or Concern

- General Maintenance (roads, parks, etc.)
- Code Enforcement or Local Ordinance
- Law Enforcement (NON-EMERGENCY)



We want to hear from you!



To give the Town of Welaka residents better access to their government and report issues or areas of concern, we have created a new web portal called "Tell Town Hall." Residents can report specific areas of concern 24 Hours a Day at TellTownHall.com. Any problem reported will be sent to both the Mayor and the Supervisor responsible for the area of concern reported.



**G-Gypsea Sea Art
Presents**

Fall Festival

Saturday October 30th 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Welaka Womens Club

Live Music All Day

Arts, Crafts, Vendors, Food & Fun

Costume Contest 4:00 PM
Adults & Kids



Give local. Save local.

Welaka Womans Club Blood Drive

Wednesday, October 13

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

644 County Road 309, Welaka

1 Donor will win a \$50.00 Bath & Body Works Gift Card!

All donors will receive a recognition item and a free cholesterol screening. Donors must be 16 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, and show photo I.D. 16-year-olds require written parental permission.

LIFESOUTH
Community Blood Centers

WELAKA BAPTIST CHURCH
PRESENTS

THE DETTY SISTERS

The Detty Sisters are group of four sisters from Ohio who travel the country playing gospel music and sharing God's Love

OCTOBER 20TH | 6:00 PM
WELAKA BAPTIST CHURCH

THERE IS NO COST TO ATTEND
AND EVERYONE IS INVITED

Welaka Christmas At The River

December 11, 2021
The Christmas Parade, including Golf Carts, Starts at Noon.
To Sign Up for any of our Events
Visit www.welaka-fl.gov

Starting at 1:00 PM that day, there will be live music in the Downtown Park, including food trucks, and Christmas Arts and Crafts vendors. The children will have the opportunity to see Santa and get their pictures taken. In the afternoon, there will a Tree Lighting Ceremony and to end the day of celebration a boat parade at the Welaka floating dock, starting at Acosta Creek Marina and ending at River Bend.

The Town of Welaka Community Survey

The Town is updating its Comprehensive Plan. The plan should reflect the Town's vision for the future. Please take our survey to let the planning team know what you think. Please drop it by Town Hall or return it by mail to Town Hall at 400 4th Ave. Welaka, Fl. 32193 by **October 15, 2021**

My relationship to the Town of Welaka is (check all that apply)

- I live in the Town of Welaka. I work in the Town of Welaka. I visit the Town of Welaka.
 I do not live or work in the Town of Welaka but I do care about it's future. Other _____

How would you characterize the Town of Welaka now?

What could be improved?

What should not change?

What suggestions do you have for other changes to the Comprehensive Plan?

What else do you want the planning team to know?

OCTOBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4 Trash & Recycling Pickup Yard Debris Pick-Up	5	6	7	8 Citizens Advisory Board Meeting 9:00 AM	9
10	11 Trash Pickup & Recycling Columbus Day Events Committee Meeting 5:45 PM	12 Zoning Board 5:30 Code Enforc 5:45 Town Council 6:30	13 Welaka Women's Club Blood Drive 9:00 to 5:00	14	15	16
17	18 Trash & Recycling Pickup Yard Debris Pick-Up	19 Charter Review Committee Meeting 6:00 PM	20 Detty Sister Live in Concert First Baptist of Welaka 6:00 PM	21	22	23
24	25 Trash & Recycling Pickup	26	27	28	29	30 Welaka Women's Club Fall Festival 10:00 to 5:00
31 Halloween Trick or Treat Party at Town Hall 5:00 to 7:00	1	2	3	4	5	6

A Moment in History

Florida was named for the day on which it was first seen (April 2, 1513) by Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon, who called it La Florida in honor of Pascua Florida, the Spanish Feast of the Flowers (Easter). Contrary to popular belief Ponce de Leon did not found St. Augustine. It was founded on September 8, 1565, by Spanish admiral Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, Florida's first governor. He named the settlement "San Agustín", as his ships bearing settlers, troops, and supplies from Spain had first sighted land in Florida eleven days earlier on August 28, the feast day of St. Augustine. The city served as the capital of Spanish Florida for over 200 years.

